

Today's News - Wednesday, December 2, 2009

- Lessons from Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi to improve our communities through innovative transportation planning + 9 great streets around the world and what they can teach us about how roads can become prime public spaces.
- Washington "seems to have learned a lesson from New York" with the Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act that will fund parks to rebuild cities.
- A Q&A with the four NYC commissioners who are making NYC a more livable city - and their unusual and "enlightened fellowship."
- Helsinki wins title of World Design Capital 2012.
- Hawthorne's take on the Swiss ban of minarets: now the focus of the "tense relationship" and debate between Islam and the West has shifted to architecture: "for supporters of the ban the towers carry heavy architectural and cultural weight."
- Huxtable cheers 41 Cooper Square: "This is high architectural drama...It is not building as bling. It is how architecture turns program and purpose into art."
- Bernstein cheers Miami's newest piece of art: H&deM's parking garage, though "for all its architectural bravado, the real artistry in the building may be the deal-making that made it happen."
- Arch Record's Design Vanguard 2009: 10 "rising stars, provocateurs, and trailblazers" (and lots of pix to prove it).
- Barker explains his "new mission is to rehabilitate the reputation of suburbia" and why it "needs a kiss of life, not a sneering curled lip" from the architects who are able to shape it.
- Commercial innovations in sustainability are finding their way into homes and condos.
- Rosenbaum offers a neat round-up (and lots of links) to all that's swirling around the demise of a Mies in Chicago and Zumthor's L.A. adventure.
- A few pieces of luscious eye candy we couldn't resist: Ron Arad's Design Museum Holon in Israel; MIT's plan for "big bubbles in the sky" over London's 2012 Olympics (with Google behind it, it just might happen); and the amazing materials named Material ConneXion's inaugural MEDIUM award winners.
- Call for papers for MillionTreesNYC's research symposium on the socio-ecology of urban landscapes, green infrastructure and public health.
- One we really couldn't resist: for a token £1-a-piece, new life for U.K.'s iconic red phone boxes.

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[From Place to Place \(Part Two\): International Innovation in Transportation Planning: From Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi, Great Ideas for Improving Our Communities \[images, links\]](#) - Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

[Washington Considers Funding Parks to Rebuild Cities: ...seems to have learned a lesson from New York: Improved open space has the power to transform communities...The Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act \(H.R. 3734\)...reflects the current thinking that parks and recreation are integral to broader efforts to rebuild the economic and social fabric of cities. \[links\]](#) - Gotham Gazette

[Mike's Angels: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg can rightfully claim that he has made New York a more livable, inviting city. But he had help. The four commissioners overseeing parks, planning, transportation, and building design have formed an enlightened fellowship... -- Adrian Benepe; Amanda Burden; David Burney; Janette Sadik-Khan](#) - The Architect's Newspaper

[Helsinki wins title of World Design Capital 2012: ...designation announced by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design \(ICSID\)...title of bid "Open Helsinki - Embedding Design in Life"...new Aalto University...new music centre in downtown Helsinki is to be completed...in time for the opening ceremonies of the WDC 2012](#) - Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)

[The Swiss minaret ban: Anxieties, unveiled: ...At least for the time being, the minaret has replaced the veil as the dominant symbol of the tense relationship between Islam and the West...Now the focus of that debate has moved to architecture...Though there are just four minarets in all of Switzerland...for supporters of the ban the towers carry heavy architectural and cultural weight. By Christopher Hawthorne \[images\]](#) - Los Angeles Times

[State of the Cooper Union: 41 Cooper Square...Mayne has got it just right...This is high architectural drama, a luminous and exhilarating invitation into the structure's life and use. It is not building as bling. It is how architecture turns program and purpose into art. And it perfectly expresses the creative energy of New York. By Ada Louise Huxtable -- Morphosis; Gruzen Samton](#) - Wall Street Journal

[Come to Park; Stay for the Architecture: Art Basel Miami Beach and Design Miami fairs have brought thousands of art aficionados...But they will have to look beyond the usual venues to see one prominent new artwork: a parking garage... By Fred A. Bernstein -- Herzog & de Meuron; Raymond Jungles \[image\]](#) - New York Times

[Design Vanguard 2009: These people aren't kids; they're rising stars, provocateurs, and trailblazers. -- DnA, Design and Architecture; BIG | Bjarke Ingels Group; Min | Day; Mount Fuji Architects Studio; Tham & Videgård Arkitekter; Neri & Hu Design and Research Office; Taylor and Miller Architecture and Design; Merzproject; Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen; José María Sánchez García \[images\]](#) - Architectural Record

[The freedoms of suburbia: Paul Barker's new mission is to rehabilitate the reputation of suburbia. Here, he explains why architects need to engage with this much-maligned space...we must go with the grain of popular choice, not stamp on it. Suburbia must be cosseted, not condemned. From the people able to shape it, suburbia needs a kiss of life, not a sneering curled lip.](#) - The Architects' Journal (UK)

[Commercial innovations lead way for green homes: First-generation sustainable concepts often innovated in commercial buildings and government offices are increasingly migrating to homes and condominiums. -- KMD Architects; Stevens Architects; SWA Group; Arup \[slide show\]](#) - San Francisco Chronicle

[Architect Watch: Mies Down in Chicago; Zumthor Up in LA. By Lee Rosenbaum -- Blair Kamin; Mies van der Rohe; Richard Lacayo; Edward Lifson; Michael Govan; Renzo Piano; Rem Koolhaas \[links\]](#) - ArtsJournal

[Ron Arad Architects: Design Museum Holon inauguration date announced: January 31, 2010...overall mission of the institution is to explore the impact of design and its relation to urban spaces and everyday life. \[images, links\]](#) - designboom

[2012 Olympics showpiece: Big bubbles in the sky..."Cloud" is...designed to broadcast real-time data and images on spherical, three-dimensional screens. While the images would float high above the city, the sound would be broadcast at ground level. -- Carlo Ratti; Senseable City LabMassachusetts Institute of Technology \(MIT\) \[slide show\]](#) - CNET

[Fishing Rods From Carrot Sticks and Canvas Made of Concrete?! Seven Amazing Materials: Material ConneXion, a materials library for designers, has just unveiled its inaugural MEDIUM awards, for the best materials of the year.](#) - Fast Company

[Call for papers: MillionTreesNYC, Green Infrastructure, and Urban Ecology: A Research Symposium to showcase research and projects that contribute to accumulating knowledge on the socio-ecology of urban landscapes, green infrastructure and public health; deadline: January 8, 2010](#) - MillionTreesNYC.org

Phone box has new life as library: A traditional red phone box has been recycled into one of the country's smallest lending libraries - stocking 100 books...."This facility has turned a piece of street furniture into a community service in constant use"...Phone boxes have been turned into art installations, a shower and even a public toilet. [image]- BBC

INSIGHT: Alignment: Sustainability and Historic Preservation: Retrofitting existing buildings is a vital strategy for significantly reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions globally. To many, it is THE strategy. By Elaine Gallagher Adams, AIA, LEED AP - ArchNewsNow



-- Exhibition: "Donald Judd: Furniture," Sebastian + Barquet, New York, NY
-- Books: "Building Up and Tearing Down: Reflections on the Age of Architecture" and "Why Architecture Matters" by Paul Goldberger

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